



Westwood Farm Community Pre-School

Registered Charity 294802

Westwood Farm Community Centre, Downs Way, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 6SL
www.WestwoodFarmPreSchool.co.uk

Chairperson's Report October 2023

Hi, I am Jo, the Chair of Committee, I currently have no child at Pre-school, which makes the job a little harder at times, but have had both my boys pass through and my daughter will be joining in September 2025 so I look forward to becoming part of the parent family again!

For those of you who have joined us tonight, let me give a little background to how the Preschool is run. The preschool staff team comprises of the most dedicated and hardest working group of wonderful ladies who are managed day-to-day by Clare and then the committee over-see this. The committee currently comprises of a group of former parents and one current parent. A committee is a group of people who ensure that an organisation fulfils all its legal obligations and operates efficiently and according to their constitution. The committee is required to have a chair, a treasurer, a secretary and 5-12 committee members. 60% of the committee need to have a child attending the Pre-school for us to be in line with our constitution. As it stands, now that many of our committee's children left and started school this September, we will need to find several new parents to join to ensure we are in line with our constitution. As a governing body, we have a shared vision of what Westwood Farm Community Pre-School is about and what it hopes for and works towards. The committee is responsible for the overall management and organisation of the setting which includes such things as HR, payroll, monitoring accounts, purchasing, marketing, and fund-raising events. Over the last few years, the make-up of our committee has changed to all being working parents which means it isn't always possible to do the types of fundraising activities we have had in the past. I'd like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to the staff for their efforts with fundraising this year again, they have been truly amazing at picking up where the committee haven't been able to. They have simply taken things on and got stuff done, a lot of which has been in their own time. The staff always go over and above and this is just one way they show it.

We changed things up this year and had a Christmas, Easter and Summer fayre at the end of each term inside the Pre-school. This worked really well and they were a lovely way to get families in and enjoying activities and games together with their children whilst raising valuable funds for Pre-School. We also had the Halloween raffle, Pumpkin carving, the Christmas shop & raffle, personalised baubles, valentines jars, the Mother's Day & Father's day shop, an Easter raffle, summer raffle, the Year book and bag2school collections that all helped to raise extra funds for Pre-school.

Over the year, Pre-school organised some exciting learning and enrichment animal experiences for the children with hatching ducklings & stick insects, the visit from the alpacas and a trip to Four Kingdoms. These have been successful activities for the last few years now and have really become the Westwood Farm Community Pre-school way! The



children also got to enjoy the thrill of the emergency services vehicles that were kindly brought in by parents, this is just one of the ways that the staff make our pre-school setting one of the best around!

The minimum wage increased again in April which is great for our staff, but has a huge impact on our Pre-school budget. Along with very low numbers this September, sadly we had a very difficult summer going through a redundancy process. We not only lost two members of staff, but had to reduce everyone's hours quite considerably to ensure that we stayed financially viable. We said a very sad goodbye to Mrs Clarke who after 9 years has moved on to work as a TA in a local Primary school. Mrs Clarke was a wonderful practitioner and was loved by all the staff and children; we wish her all the best of luck in her new role. We also said a sad goodbye to Mrs Woodman who had been with us a year and half doing lunch club and some sessions. Mrs Woodman had a lovely calm nature with the children and will be missed at Pre-school.

With such low numbers this term and with very few on our waiting list for the Spring and Summer term, we will not be able to reinstate staff hours until the number of children increases. This process was both emotionally and mentally tiring for those of us involved and something that was an extremely difficult decision for committee but ultimately one that had to be made to save the pre-school and ensure it had a future. This was extremely hard on our staff and I want to take this opportunity to let them all know just how much we admired their devotion and commitment to Pre-school, their strength through a very difficult time was incredible to see. The way they all stuck together as a team has made them come out even stronger the other side. Staff always put the needs of Pre-school first; the children and their families are so very lucky to have you all.

As you are all aware after communication I sent out recently, this will be my last AGM in on committee as I am stepping down this year after four years in the post of chair. I won't say much more on this as I'll get emotional, but please read the letter that was sent out if you haven't already.

So I am therefore reaching out to you today with an exciting opportunity to make a meaningful impact in our community. We are looking for dedicated individuals like yourselves to join our committee and help us achieve our goals. Positive change starts with passionate individuals coming together to work towards a common cause... your children! Your children need the fun and education, families need childcare, if we don't have a committee unfortunately there will come a time when we will no longer be able to provide the service we do. The Early Years is so very important to life-long learning and therefore our committee plays a vital role in creating a lasting impact on the lives of the children in our Pre-school family.

Being part of committee can be both enjoyable and rewarding. Each trustee brings with them their own set of skills and ideas that can be used to enhance the group and therefore support and strengthen the Pre-school. In return, there are benefits to yourself in volunteering, making new friends, gaining opportunities to develop new skills in areas such as management, marketing and recruitment. Parental involvement is voluntary and mostly informal, but it is absolutely critical to our future – it is simple, without a committee



of trustees, Westwood Farm community Preschool would not exist. One way we, as parents, can support the staff and ultimately your children, is to provide them with a strong committee made up of parents who want to help the Pre-school. We have many of our current members leaving us and therefore have many spaces to fill. I want to thank all our committee leavers for all of their support over the last year and the years before that, we appreciate the time you have given to your role.

So, what does joining the committee look like? It's a small commitment, a 1-2hour meeting 3-6 times a year, plus whatever jobs you volunteer to do, so it can be as time consuming as you make it! It's a fun, informal atmosphere at the meetings which are held here in the bar at the club. You will have an opportunity in shaping and developing the Pre-school. If you are interested in joining the committee, but don't want to put your name down right now then you can always speak to a member of the current committee or staff tonight, or alternatively you can email or call me for a chat about it. We have an extremely loving and dedicated team of staff who are warm and welcoming, it is a pleasure working with them all and I hope more of you will be able to join our committee to see this first hand too. I for one will miss them all, but feel lucky enough to now call the staff my friends.

Thank you for listening, and I hope it has helped make things a little clearer as to how a Preschool is managed. Hopefully I haven't scared you off and that there are some new parents who would be interested in joining!

Jo Butcher

Pre-school Chair



Westwood Farm Community Pre-School

AGM 2022-23 – 18 October 2023

Treasurers Report

For the period to 31 March 2023

Hello all, my name is Richard Churchill, and I am the current treasurer for Westwood Farm Community Pre-School and a committee member. I became treasurer during the last year in February 2023. I do not have any children at the pre school but have previously had Ben, Martha and Ruby all attend the pre school over the last 8 years and my wife, Michelle was the chair before Jo.

The pre-school is a registered charity but its primary funding sources are the funding received from the local authority and fees received from parents. The donations and fundraising income received is less than 10% of the total revenue. However, this revenue is essential to allow the pre-school to continue.

The accounts for 31 March 2023 have been drafted and I will arrange for a contact to conduct an independent review prior to their filing, and I would like to thank Nicki for her hard work on this.

The Pre-School has gone through a difficult financial period as a result of ever-increasing costs primarily in the form of staff wages but with minimal increases in the funding received for each child.

In the year to March 2023 the pre-school suffered a deficit for the year of £12,213. This is primarily due to increased wage costs. These costs increased as a result of increases in the National Minimum Wage and also increasing staffing numbers to ensure the level of service delivery was maintained at a good standard despite a number of more challenging children.

In the prior year, 31 March 2022, our funding was £93,649 and wage costs £93,236. In the year to 31 March 2023 our funding increased to £98,868 but wage costs increased to £107,904. The difference being almost equivalent to the deficit suffered. The majority of the Pre-School's other costs are quite fixed and are usually between £20,000-£22,000 each year.

As at 31 March 2023 the Pre-School had a retained surplus of £41,915.

Additionally, against this backdrop of increased wage costs and a deficit for the year to 31 March 2023 it was also known the Pre-School had a reduced number of children from September 2023.

This left the committee with the difficult decision to reduce costs. Over the summer months the committee has worked with staff and the management of the Pre-School to reduce wage costs. This means that currently the pre-School is operating on a breakeven basis and will not sustain any further losses. The committee and management continue to



work to generate additional funds through advertising, grants and donations. There have been recent announcements of funding rate increases for future years and this along with hopefully adding more children to the Pre-School will allow the Pre-School to operate at a surplus in the future.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jo for her contribution as Chair for 4 years and in particular during the challenging period of 2023. As I said at the outset I do not have any children at the Pre-School and took up the treasurer role to allow the Pre-School to have a functioning committee in accordance with its articles. If anyone is interested in taking on the role then I am happy to stand down to allow this to happen but will continue should no one wish to take on the role.

WESTWOOD FARM COMMUNITY PRESCHOOL**Charity Number:294802****ACCOUNTS FOR THE PERIOD****1 APRIL 2022 TO 31 MARCH 2023****INCOME & EXPENDITURE STATEMENT**

	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-22
	£	£
<u>INCOME</u>		
WEST BERKS FUNDING	98,868.49	93,649.30
FUND RAISING EVENTS	5,396.03	4,465.13
FEES	12,676.35	13,677.05
REGISTRATIONS	-	-
UNIFORM SALES	414.88	306.11
OTHER INCOME	915.14	307.50
INTEREST	38.88	1.56
TOTAL INCOME BEFORE EXPENSES	118,309.77	112,406.65
<u>EXPENSES</u>		
WAGES	107,904.37	93,236.98
ENTERTAINMENT/EVENTS	-	30.47
OFSTED/CRD CHECKS	-	108.10
STATIONERY	1,126.12	1,057.13
RENT & SERVICES	7,326.00	7,326.00
CLEANING	857.75	1,108.07
TRAVEL & TRIPS	937.50	282.25
SUBSCRIPTIONS	1,701.34	1,521.58
EQUIPMENT & PLAYGROUND	2,202.83	1,053.19
IT	445.60	536.13
TRAINING	1,577.00	880.11
FUNDRAISING	729.27	712.16
INSURANCE	1,543.75	1,511.58
REFRESHMENTS/SNACKS	852.99	661.40
PRINTING: UNIFORM/TSHIRTS	1,492.71	1,667.90
PUPIL PREMIUM EQUIPMENT	1,044.71	1,559.54
OTHER EXPENSES	780.92	536.44
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	130,522.86	113,789.03
NET INCOME FOR THE PERIOD	(12,213.09)	(1,382.38)

WESTWOOD FARM COMMUNITY PRESCHOOL**BALANCE SHEET****as at 31 MARCH 2023**

	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-22
	£	£
<u>ASSETS</u>		
SAVINGS ACCOUNT BALANCE 31/3/23	21,124.10	16,085.22
ORDINARY ACCOUNT BALANCE 31/3/23	40,020.76	45,782.81
LESS OUTSTANDING WAGES	(20,221.83)	(8,024.65)
	19,798.93	37,758.16
TREASURERS ACCOUNT BALANCE 31 MARCH 2023	991.98	284.72
	41,915.01	54,128.10
RETAINED SURPLUS AS AT 1 APRIL 2022	54,128.10	55,510.48
LESS: NET DEFECIT IN PERIOD	(12,213.09)	(1,382.38)
RETAINED SURPLUS AS AT 31 MARCH 2023	41,915.01	54,128.10



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Charity Name
WESTWOOD FARM COMMUNITY PRE-SCHOOL

On accounts for the year
ended

31 March 2023

Charity no
(if any)

294802

Set out on pages

1 page showing income and expenditure and retained reserves, headed accounts for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **31 March 2023**.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent
examiner's statement

I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of ICAEW.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed: *Rick Behan*

Date: 25/01/24

Name: Rick Behan

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body

ICAEW - 1176341

(if any):

Address:

3 Coldbath Square
London
EC1R 5HL

Section B	Disclosure
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Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

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